

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY PA:JMO'BRIEN:LK

APPROVED BY PA:JEREINHARDT

S/S: FORTIZ

PA:MR. BRAY

PA/M:MR. ROSHCO

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 016703 TOSEC 010157

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM PA - REINHARDT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: BRIEFING MEMORANDUM: U.S. EDITORIAL OPINION ON

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

1. WE HAVE REVIEWED FIFTY-NINE EDITORIALS ON THE ANGOLA SITUATION APPEARING IN MAJOR NEWSPAPERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY SINCE EARLY DECEMBER. ALTHOUGH OUR SAMPLE CONTAINS ONLY THIRTY-THREE NEWSPAPERS, THESE PAPERS SPAN THE COUNTRY AND ARE AMONG THOSE WITH HIGHEST READERSHIP AND MOST INFLUENCE. TOGETHER, THEY HAVE MORE THAN ONE-FIFTH OF TOTAL NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION AND ARE LIKELY TO REFLECT THE PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSES OF EDITORIAL WRITERS ON MOST OTHER PAPERS. WE FIND IT SIGNIFICANT THAT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT AS ONE-SIDED AS ONE MIGHT HAVE ANTICIPATED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MID-JANUARY WASHINGTON.

2. WHAT STRIKES US IS NOT THE FACT THAT A BARE MAJORITY (18) OF THE PAPERS OPPOSE PRESENT POLICY IN ANGOLA (EVEN THOUGH THESE PAPERS ARE GENERALLY OF GREATER CIRCULATION

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AND PRESTIGE), BUT THE FACT THAT ALMOST AS MANY (15) SUP-

PORT THE ADMINISTRATION. IN ADDITION, TWO OF THE SUPPORTIVE PAPERS CRITICIZE THE ADMINISTRATION FOR NOT TAKING A STRONGER STAND AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION AND STATE THAT PRESENT EFFORTS ARE INADEQUATE.

MOREOVER, THOSE PAPERS WHICH CRITICIZE CURRENT POLICY NEVERTHELESS GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOME FORM OF U.S. RESPONSE TO SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA IS NECESSARY, AND THEIR CRITICISM IS DIRECTED AGAINST THE KIND OF RESPONSE CHOSEN (COVERT MILITARY AID) RATHER THAN AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION'S DETERMINATION TO RESPOND. THESE CRITICAL NEWSPAPERS CALL FOR ALTERNATIVES RATHER THAN INACTION AND ISOLATION.

#### CRITICISM

MOST CONSISTENTLY CRITICIZED ELEMENTS OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY WERE:

- THE SECRECY WITH WHICH U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA WAS UNDERTAKEN
- THE SEEMING ALLIANCE WITH SOUTH AFRICA
- THE LOW PROBABILITY THAT U.S. MILITARY AID WILL BRING ABOUT VICTORY FOR ANTI-COMMUNIST FORCES

#### SUPPORT

MOST CONSISTENT ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT EMPHASIZED:

- THE THREAT TO U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS POSED BY A SUCCESSFUL SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA
- THE DANGER OF CONGRESSIONAL MEDDLING IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

#### ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

EDITORIAL WRITERS SUGGESTED THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVES MOST FREQUENTLY:

- PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE PREMISES AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR ANGOLA POLICY

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- A GREATER DEGREE OF CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS BY THE ADMINISTRATION
- INCREASED DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON THE SOVIET UNION INCLUDING THREATS TO CURTAIL OR CANCEL FUTURE GRAIN SALES
- USE OF THE UN AND THE OAU AS FORUMS FOR DENUNCIATION OF SOVIET INTERVENTION

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